

Civil Aviation Organization on stage 4 aircraft noise levels; and

(3) the feasibility of proceeding with the development and implementation of a timetable for air carrier compliance with stage 4 aircraft noise requirements.

TITLE —AIRLINE COMMISSION

SEC. —01. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the "Improved Consumer Access to Travel Information Act".

SEC. —02. NATIONAL COMMISSION TO ENSURE CONSUMER INFORMATION AND CHOICE IN THE AIRLINE INDUSTRY.

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—There is established a commission to be known as the "National Commission to Ensure Consumer Information and Choice in the Airline Industry" (in this section referred to as the "Commission").

(b) **DUTIES.**—

(1) **STUDY.**—The Commission shall undertake a study of—

(A) consumer access to information about the products and services of the airline industry;

(B) the effect on the marketplace of the emergence of new means of distributing such products and services;

(C) the effect on consumers of the declining financial condition of travel agents in the United States; and

(D) the impediments imposed by the airline industry on distributors of the industry's products and services, including travel agents and Internet-based distributors.

(2) **POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS.**—Based on the results of the study described in paragraph (1), the Commission shall recommend to the President and Congress policies necessary to—

(A) ensure full consumer access to complete information concerning airline fares, routes, and other services;

(B) ensure that the means of distributing the products and services of the airline industry, and of disseminating information about such products and services, is adequate to ensure that competitive information is available in the marketplace;

(C) ensure that distributors of the products and services of the airline industry have adequate relief from illegal, anticompetitive practices that occur in the marketplace; and

(D) foster healthy competition in the airline industry and the entry of new entrants.

(c) **SPECIFIC MATTERS TO BE ADDRESSED.**—

In carrying out the study authorized under subsection (b)(1), the Commission shall specifically address the following:

(1) **CONSUMER ACCESS TO INFORMATION.**—With respect to consumer access to information regarding the services and products offered by the airline industry, the following:

(A) The state of such access.

(B) The effect in the 5-year period following the date of the study of the making of alliances in the airline industry.

(C) Whether and to what degree the trends regarding such access will produce benefits to consumers.

(2) **MEANS OF DISTRIBUTION.**—With respect to the means of distributing the products and services of the airline industry, the following:

(A) The state of such means of distribution.

(B) The roles played by travel agencies and Internet-based providers of travel information and services in distributing such products and services.

(C) Whether the policies of the United States promote the access of consumers to multiple means of distribution.

(3) **AIRLINE RESERVATION SYSTEMS.**—With respect to airline reservation systems, the following:

(A) The rules, regulations, policies, and practices of the industry governing such systems.

(B) How trends in such systems will affect consumers, including—

(i) the effect on consumer access to flight reservation information; and

(ii) the effect on consumers of the use by the airline industry of penalties and promotions to convince distributors to use such systems, and the degree of consumer awareness of such penalties and promotions.

(d) **MEMBERSHIP.**—

(1) **APPOINTMENT.**—The Commission shall be composed of 15 voting members and 11 nonvoting members as follows:

(A) 5 voting members and 1 nonvoting member appointed by the President.

(B) 3 voting members and 3 nonvoting members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

(C) 2 voting members and 2 nonvoting members appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives.

(D) 3 voting members and 3 nonvoting members appointed by the majority leader of the Senate.

(E) 2 voting members and 2 nonvoting members appointed by the minority leader of the Senate

(2) **QUALIFICATIONS.**—Voting members appointed under paragraph (1) shall be appointed from among individuals who are experts in economics, service product distribution, or transportation, or any related discipline, and who can represent consumers, passengers, shippers, travel agents, airlines, or general aviation.

(3) **TERMS.**—Members shall be appointed for the life of the Commission.

(4) **VACANCIES.**—A vacancy in the Commission shall be filled in the manner in which the original appointment was made.

(5) **TRAVEL EXPENSES.**—Members shall serve without pay but shall receive travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, in accordance with subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code.

(6) **CHAIRPERSON.**—The President, in consultation with the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the majority leader of the Senate, shall designate the Chairperson of the Commission (referred to in this title as the "Chairperson") from among its voting members.

(e) **COMMISSION PANELS.**—The Chairperson shall establish such panels consisting of voting members of the Commission as the Chairperson determines appropriate to carry out the functions of the Commission.

(f) **STAFF.**—The Commission may appoint and fix the pay of such personnel as it considers appropriate.

(g) **STAFF OF FEDERAL AGENCIES.**—Upon request of the Commission, the head of any department or agency of the United States may detail, on a reimbursable basis, any of the personnel of that department or agency to the Commission to assist it in carrying out its duties under this section.

(h) **OTHER STAFF AND SUPPORT.**—Upon the request of the Commission, or a panel of the Commission, the Secretary of Transportation shall provide the Commission or panel with professional and administrative staff and other support, on a reimbursable basis, to assist the Commission or panel in carrying out its responsibilities.

(i) **OBTAINING OFFICIAL DATA.**—The Commission may secure directly from any department or agency of the United States information (other than information required by any statute of the United States to be kept confidential by such department or agency) necessary for the Commission to carry out its duties under this section. Upon request of the Commission, the head of that department or agency shall furnish such

nonconfidential information to the Commission.

(j) **REPORT.**—Not later than 6 months after the date on which initial appointments of members to the Commission are completed, the Commission shall transmit to the President and Congress a report on the activities of the Commission, including recommendations made by the Commission under subsection (b)(2).

(k) **TERMINATION.**—The Commission shall terminate on the 30th day following the date of transmittal of the report under subsection (j). All records and papers of the Commission shall thereupon be delivered by the Administrator of General Services for deposit in the National Archives.

(l) **APPLICABILITY OF THE FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT.**—The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to the Commission.

On page 162, before line 15, insert the following:

(3) **CONFORMING AMENDMENT.**—Section 4171(a)(3) is amended by adding at the end thereof the following: The 132 slot cap under this paragraph does not apply to exemptions or slots made available under section 41718."

NOTICES OF HEARINGS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS, HISTORIC PRESERVATION, AND RECREATION

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the information of the Senate and the public that the hearing originally scheduled for Tuesday, October 12, 1999, at 2:30 p.m., before the Subcommittee on National Parks, Historic Preservation, and Recreation of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources has been rescheduled for Wednesday, October 13, 1999, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building in Washington, DC.

For further information please contact Jim O'Toole or Cassie Sheldon of the committee staff at (202) 224-6969.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the information of the Senate and the public that the legislative hearing scheduled for 9:30 a.m., on October 26, 1999, before the Energy and Natural Resources Committee to receive testimony on S. 882, a bill to strengthen provisions in the Energy Policy Act of 1992 and the Federal Nonnuclear Energy Research and Development Act of 1974 with respect to potential climate change has been cancelled.

For further information, please call Kristin Phillips, Staff Assistant or Colleen Deegan, Counsel, at (202) 224-8115.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet at 9:30 a.m., on Tuesday, October 5, 1999, in closed session, to receive testimony from Department of Energy and Intelligence Community witnesses on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.